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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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10/551,017

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Teiko Sutoh

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MARSHALL, GERSTEIN & BORUN LLP
233 SOUTH WACKER DRIVE
6300 WILLIS TOWER
CHICAGO, IL 60606-6357

EXAMINER

MCKANE, ELIZABETH L

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

1797

MAIL DATE

DELIVERY MODE

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PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/551,017	Applicant(s) SUTOH ET AL.	
	Examiner ELIZABETH L. MCKANE	Art Unit 1797	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 21 June 2010.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-3,7 and 10-12 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-3,7 and 10-12 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

1. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 21 June 2010 has been entered.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

2. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

3. Claims 1-3, 7, 10, and 11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Patel (WO 00/61200) in view of Kirckof (US 6,488,890).

Patel teaches a plasma sterilization indicator including an adsorption indicator (page 9, lines 5-9) and an organic metal compound (page 12, lines 10-26).

Furthermore, Patel discloses that a product is formed in a reaction between the adsorption indicator and the activator (metal compound), which product discolors into a definitely different color change. See page 12, lines 10-13 wherein Patel teaches that the activator produces a reactive species in the presence of the plasma or hydrogen peroxide which reacts with the indicator to form a colored compound. Patel further

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discloses that the plasma atmosphere causes a change in pH (see Table 1). In use, an article is placed within a container to which is affixed the indicator. See page 3, lines 21-23 and lines 29-34; page 4, lines 33-34. Patel is silent with respect to the incorporation of a polyvalent alcohol in the indicator but does teach that the inks can be 'solvent based' (page 16, lines 19-20) and/or formulated in the form of ink formulations (col.15, line 10). Kirckof teaches a plasma sterilization indicator composition that can be applied to substrates using known printing processes such as ink jet printing. The composition includes a dye(s), water, and glycol solvents. See Tables 7a and 7b. The glycol solvents used are ethylene glycol and diethylene glycol. See Example 7. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to use a water-soluble polyol as the 'alcohol' of Patel, since Kirckof evidences its use in plasma sterilization indicator ink compositions. The results of using a known polyol solvent in the ink formulation of Patel would have been readily apparent and expected.

Patel further discloses that the adsorption indicator may be hematoxylin (page 10, line 23), eriochrome black T (page 10, line 17), or pyridlazo naphthol (page 11, line 14) and that the organic metal compound may be an aluminum chelate compound (aluminum acetylacetonate). See page 12, line 31. It is well-within the purview of one of ordinary skill in the art to choose from the indicators and activators disclosed by Patel to achieve the desired outcome, depending upon the chosen sterilant for the plasma, as well as the humidity, temperature, and time for sterilization.

4. Claim 12 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Patel in view of Kirckof as applied to claim 10 above, and further in view of Schmidt et al. (US 2002/01552240).

The combination of Patel with Kirckof discloses using the glycol solvent in an amount of 20% for a chemical indicator ink to be used in an ink jet printer. See Tables 7a and 7b. Schmidt et al. teaches inks for use in an ink jet printer wherein polyvalent alcohol solvents such as dipropylene glycol, polyethylene glycol, and polypropylene glycol are disclosed to be present in an amount of about 2-20%. See para [0013]-[0014]. Schmidt et al. further discloses that dipropylene glycol is preferred as it serves as a humectant and prevents clogging and plugging of ink jet nozzles. See para [0019]. Thus, it is deemed obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to adjust the amount of organic solvent as necessary to achieve the desired properties of the ink, where such is readily determinable by routine experimentation.

Response to Arguments

5. Applicant's arguments filed 21 June 2010 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

6. On pages 4-5 of the Response, Applicant argues that the discoloring of the present invention "occurs according to an entirely different mechanism from that of Patel." However, the claims require only a product formed in a reaction between at least one compound (A) and the organic metal compound (B) discolors into a definitely

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different color in a particular pH range due to a pH change. As set forth in the rejection *supra*, this is precisely what Patel teaches on page 12.

7. Moreover, although Applicant notes that in Patel the reactive species are bromine anions wherein in the present invention the reactive specie is a cation, the instant claims do not require a particular ion as the reactive species.

Conclusion

8. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to ELIZABETH L. MCKANE whose telephone number is (571)272-1275. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Fri; 5:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m..

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Jill Warden can be reached on 571-272-1267. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Elizabeth L McKane/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 1797

elm
5 July 2010